

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 15948 240441Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----002333 242307Z /61

R 231709Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8626
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T LONDON 15948

EXDIS

E.O. XGDS-L
TAGS: PLO, UK, XF
SUBJECT: CURRENT BRITISH POLICY ON CONTACTS WITH PLO

REF: DAMASCUS 5367; STATE 200664

L. DURING CONVERSATION SEPTEMBER 22 WITH TOMKYS, HEAD OF FCO NEAR EAST DEPT., EMBOFF ASKED ABOUT CIRCUMSTANCES OF CALL ON PLO'S FAHUM BY BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS LAST MONTH (REFTEL). EMBOFF NOTED WE ARE MERELY CURIOUS TO KNOW IF BRITISH POLICY ON FORM OF CONTACTS WITH PLO HAS EVOLVED. TOMKYS NOTED THAT RECENTLY FCO HAD AUTHORIZED ITS AMBASSADORS IN BOTH BEIRUT AND DAMASCUS TO UNDERTAKE DIRECT BUT DISCREET CONTACT WITH PLO. ACCORDINGLY SAID TOMKYS, CRAIG CALLED ON FAHUM AT THE LATTER'S OFFICE (TOMKYS WAS NOT SURE WHAT KIND OF OFFICE). CRAIG WAS FLYING THE FLAG ON HIS CAR BECAUSE HE ALWAYS FLIES IT, THE CAR ITSELF BEING SO DISTINCTIVE AS TO OBVIATE INCONSPICUOUSNESS. ALERT REUTERS CAUGHT CRAIG IN THE ACT, AND CONSEQUENT PRESS REPORT PRODUCED PROTEST TO FCO
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FROM ISRAELI EMBASSY HERE, ANNOYED EDITORIAL IN JEWISH OBSERVER, AND FEW LETTERS TO FCO INSPIRED BY PRO-ISRAELI LOBBY.

2. THE PLO, ACCORDING TO TOMKYS, IS PLAYING UP THE MEETING AS A "STEP FORWARD" TOWARDS FULL RECOGNITION BY THE BRITISH, BUT IT IS NOT CONSIDERED AS SUCH BY THE

FCO.

BREWSTER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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